

The Revd D^r Clarke

from the Revd J. Phemptre

ON THE
TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES
INTO THE
LANGUAGES OF INDIAN ASIA.



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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

On the 28th of JUNE, 1807,

AGREEABLY TO

THE INSTITUTION OF THE REV. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN,

BY

THE REV. JOHN DUDLEY, M.A.

OF CLARE HALL.

A DECLARATION OF TRUTH IS MORE EXCELLENT THAN SILENCE.

MENU, Ch. ii. v. 83.

CAMBRIDGE:

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1807.

IMPRIMATUR,

GULIELMUS PEARCE, Pro-Can^s.

1 Jul. 1807.

TO
THE REV. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN, M. A.
VICE-PROVOST OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT-WILLIAM, IN BENGAL;
THE
FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,
CONTAINING
A GENERAL VIEW OF THOSE *HINDÚ* ERRORS, WHICH, WITH A NOBLE ZEAL
HE ENDEAVOURS TO REMOVE,
IS INSCRIBED,
WITH THE MOST SINCERE ESTEEM
AND PROFOUND RESPECT,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

HUMBERSTON, near LEICESTER,

Sept. 23, 1807.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE BOARD OF CHEMISTS

FOR THE YEAR 1900

CHICAGO, ILL.

1901

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1901

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the following Discourse, desirous to promote, by some contribution, the execution of the measure he had undertaken to recommend, offered the whole of the produce arising from the sale of the Work, to that part of the funds of the British and Foreign Bible Society which is appropriated to the encouragement of Oriental Translations of the Holy Scriptures. Finding, however, that it was inconsistent with the principles of that Society to make themselves parties in the publication of any Work, (Bibles, Testaments, and their own Reports excepted,) the management of the sale necessarily rested with himself; but he still devotes the produce, whatever it may be, to the purpose originally intended; and begs the Society to accept and apply it to their funds accordingly.

COPY of a LETTER from the Rev. C. BUCHANAN, Vice-Provost of the College of Fort-William in Bengal, to the VICE-CHANCELLOR of the University of Cambridge.

“ SIR,

“ I HAVE the honor to enclose a Copy of Proposals for translating the Scriptures into the Oriental Languages; which I request you will be pleased to submit to the principal Members of your Society.

“ If the design should appear to you to be worthy of encouragement, I would propose that Two Sermons shall be preached before the University on the subject of the Oriental Translations, by such Members of the University as the University shall think fit to appoint; and at such times as may be convenient.

“ I request that each of the Preachers will do me the honor to accept the sum of Thirty Guineas, which I have directed my Agents, Messrs. Boehm and Co. of London to present, on delivery of a printed Copy of the Sermon for the College of Fort-William in Bengal.

“ I have the honor to be,

Sir,

With much respect,

Your most obedient and humble Servant,

“ Calcutta, March 18, 1806.

C. BUCHANAN.”

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“ CUM Vir Reverendus Claudius Buchanan, Collegii Bengalensis Vice-Præpositus, satis ampla quædam Præmia duobus Concionatoribus, qui apud Vos de Sacris Scripturis in Linguas Orientales convertendis Conciones habeant, posuerit:

“ PLACEAT Vobis, ut Domino Procancellario, Regio Norrisianoque Theologiæ Professoribus, et duobus Procuratoribus; aut eorum vices gerentibus, si qui fuerint, vel saltem tribus eorum consentientibus, quorum unus semper sit Procancellarius, potestas dictos Concionatores eligendi, et tempora pro Concionibus assignandi, concedatur: quin et, si iisdem Electoribus melius visum fuerit, unum quendam instituendi virum doctum ad ambas Conciones habendas.

“ Lect. A. M. }  
Concess. P. M. } 16 Jan. 1807.”

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IN consequence of the above Grace, the VICE-CHANCELLOR and the other four ELECTORS were unanimously pleased to appoint the Rev. JOHN DUDLEY, M. A. of Clare Hall, to preach on the 28th of June, 1807.

ACTS XVII. 22, 23.

— YE MEN OF ATHENS, I PERCEIVE THAT IN ALL THINGS YE ARE TOO SUPERSTITIOUS; FOR AS I PASSED BY, AND BEHELD YOUR DEVOTIONS, I FOUND AN ALTAR WITH THIS INSCRIPTION, *TO THE UNKNOWN GOD*. WHOM THEREFORE YE IGNORANTLY WORSHIP, HIM DECLARE I UNTO YOU.

THOSE extensive countries, which ancients and moderns alike distinguish by the name of India, are so inclosed by strong and continued barriers, that they may be said to form a world within themselves; a world which has often reposed uninjured and undisturbed, while the shock of battles and the tempest of war convulsed or overwhelmed the mightiest states and empires of surrounding Asia. The wide-ranging expeditions of the Indian Bacchus of early antiquity, and the fanatical inroads of the disciples of Mahomet in later times, did indeed, like the waters of an extraordinary and excessive inundation, burst over the usual barriers to the tide of war, and overwhelmed the unwonted plains of *Hindúst'han*. Yet these, when the fury of the flood abated, soon ceased to be connected with the inundating stream; the ancient barriers again resumed their office; and India, however torn by the rushing influx of the foreign torrent, became, as before, a distinct and secluded region¹. Her laws recovered their wonted authority, her religious institutions were observed with even increased respect, and thus survived the extinguished sister worship of Egypt, Syria, Greece and Rome; changed only by the introduction of such addititious follies as must always be expected, when men have forsaken the paths of truth, and are desperately treading the mazes of error.

This ancient seclusion of India seems to have so radically estranged the rest of mankind from all regard toward her, that even the people of the British Isles, while they possess within its boundaries an empire almost quadrupling, in extent, fertility and population, their native kingdoms, seem little anxious to contemplate the manners, arts, and ancient institutions of those nations, notwithstanding they afford the amplest field for the research of the antiquary, the study of the philosopher, and the meditation of the divine. I shall not presume to censure this inattention; but I must observe, that we as Christians ought not to be indifferent to these various objects, especially when some of our countrymen confidently assure us that fifty millions of souls², there subject to our empire, and at least three times as many connected with it, have never seen, and scarcely heard of the Gospel of salvation³; for we have indeed hitherto kept it from them wrapped up in a napkin, notwithstanding they appear well inclined to read its doctrines, perhaps to receive its faith. That this opinion may not be erroneous, every good Christian will anxiously hope: nor will his hope appear ill founded, if he duly weigh the various circumstances favourable to the interests of the religion of the Gospel, and especially three circumstances which afford ground for the most confident expectations. These are, first, the character of the *Hindús*, who compose the most ancient and by far the most numerous part of the population of modern India; secondly, the rise, progress, and present state of their religion; and lastly, the assurances afforded by Revelation of the future general conversion of all mankind to the faith of Christ. As my colleague in this institution has in his discourse, already delivered, discussed, with all the blaze of eloquence, most of the particulars relating to the actual translation of the Scriptures into the Oriental languages, it may be now unnecessary to add any farther notices on that part of the subject: I shall therefore confine myself to the inquiry into the probable effects of that measure, which will be found principally to depend upon the three circumstances above

mentioned. To this enquiry I am the more inclined, because I conceive it will serve to prove that such a translation of the Scriptures is a measure not only in itself likely to be productive of the most beneficial and extensive consequences; but also, that it is the first which ought to be taken towards the conversion of the nations of India.

It appears very plainly, from the communications of some Greeks who visited the *Indus* and the *Ganges* about the time of the invasion of India by Alexander the Great, and their evidence is confirmed by such gleams of history as are occasionally emitted by the newly-discovered *Sanscrit* records, that the whole of modern *Hindúst'han*, (that is of India, exclusive of the southern peninsula) was in the earliest ages divided into a variety of powerful states, some monarchical, and others republican, or rather resembling the feudal governments of the middle ages of Europe; a constitution still preserved among the principal *Hindú* powers, the *Seiks* and the *Mahrattas*. The constitutions of all these states seem to have been founded on free principles. Arrian expressly writes, "the Indians are all free⁴:" and it may be safely affirmed, that they enjoyed nearly the same degree of liberty as the states of ancient Greece and Italy. Upon the same authorities we are enabled to conclude that these states were ruled by salutary laws and wholesome ordinances; that arts and sciences flourished within their cities; that the people were not only civilized, but refined; and that the various cities and provinces within the dominions of each, were occupied by a numerous and happy population. The history of nations, whether ancient or modern, sufficiently proves that virtue alone can produce such prosperity; and hence we must draw conclusions decidedly favourable to the general character of the nations of ancient India. Such conclusions may be farther inferred from the present state of its inhabitants; who, in spite of the mischievous policy of the Mahometan government, and the corrupting tendency of a degrading superstition, exist, like the extended ruins of cities, palaces, and temples, which their country

in every part exhibits, the monuments of the former greatness of their nation ; and prove their descent from ancestors of renown. To relate how their country was reduced to ruins, is the part of the historian ; to consider what the people now are, and how they became such, will not be inconsistent with the object of the present discourse.

The numerous Europeans who have entered the provinces of India, for the purposes either of commerce, of war, or of government, concur in representing the original and native inhabitants as elegant in their manners, amiable in their dispositions, and adorned by many virtues, which shine with an endearing brightness through every shade of either fault or vice. Some of their admirers have even proceeded to affirm, that they surpass the most polished nations of Europe in elegance of dress, in gracefulness of demeanour, and in the sensible propriety and delicacy of their general behaviour. Indeed, gentleness and mildness of temper, (not perhaps without more abatement than has usually been made in these their virtues⁵;) may be esteemed the characteristic of the whole race. Nor are they less celebrated for punctuality in the performance of their engagements ; and for fidelity, whenever they acknowledge and undertake a trust under circumstances which their religion assures them ought to be binding⁶. It is universally admitted, that for filial obedience they are, almost without exception, exemplary ; and so profound is their respect and reverence toward their superiors, that Europeans are apt to deem their submission almost such as might become a slave. Their observance of every supposed religious duty is so strict and steady, as to excite astonishment ; for their attention to all the perplexing and often painful rules of purification is almost uninterrupted⁷ : their attendance on the rites of religious worship is frequent and regular, though always accompanied by expence in offerings and oblations⁸ ; nor are the instances few or rare of the fruits of a whole life of industry being consumed in a single religious festival, solemnized by an individual, with rites which Europeans call licentious ; although

considered by the zealous votary, not only as blameless, but as devout and holy⁹. If again we remark the various long and tedious pilgrimages¹⁰ which every *Hindú* performs once at least in his life, but numbers frequently repeat; or if we observe the devotional austerities willingly endured, often for a long period, and in some cases till death; or if again the sacrifice even of life itself, not only in the phrenzy of enthusiasm, but oftener to avoid a violation of religious duty; the observer may with much truth pronounce him to be either the most virtuous or corrupt, the most religious or superstitious of mankind.

These traits of character are so strikingly remarkable, that they have seldom failed to excite conjectures concerning their causes. The proud European, especially when his acquaintance with this people has been imperfect or superficial, ascribes their superstitious obedience to the want of intellect, which, owing either to a relaxing climate or some other cause, renders them, he thinks, absolutely blind to the religious absurdities they so thoroughly receive. But to this it may be replied, that climate is not generally an insuperable obstacle to either mental or bodily vigour. This is often proved, even by the uneducated *Hindús* of the present times; and must be learned from the mighty works of their ancestors; from their potent empires; from their arts, whose very remains may improve Europeans; and from their writings, either literary or philosophical, which our best scholars may at least read with pleasure, if not imitate with advantage. Nor is that trait in the *Hindú* character which we are too apt to denominate slavish, to be ascribed to a want of courage or spirit. The natives of India are not naturally deficient in these qualities. They astonish Europeans by their contempt of death: and when formed into soldiers by the rules of European discipline, they honourably imitate the valour of European troops, to whom they may be proposed as examples of military subordination and fidelity; examples which many of our countrymen, who have served as officers in the native battalions, have remembered

with affection, and mentioned with gratitude. Upon what then does the motley character of the *Hindú* depend? By what principle is it chiefly influenced, and how is it formed? The answer is, His religion forms his character; for his religion influences his every action. He is good or bad as his religion commands or permits. To bring all the evidences which occur in proof of this, the present occasion will not allow; but a few observations may suffice; and these may lead to an inference by no means unimportant to the present subject.

That the disciples of *Brahmá* should learn from the precepts of their religion all the moral virtues which adorn their character, will not be heard with surprize, when it is recollected that the philosophers of India have been the subject of praise and admiration from the earliest antiquity; and especially when some of those didactic writings have been read, which the industrious curiosity of our *Sanscrit* scholars has translated for our perusal*. The moral system, like the moral character of the Indians, is not indeed perfect: it admits, for instance, the expediency of pious frauds, and allows the dangerous privilege of taking a false oath on certain occasions†; but in general it is admirable and excellent¹¹, and contains precepts which are only to be found in our Holy Scriptures, and some which we have been wont to consider as almost exclusively peculiar to the Christian doctrines. Of these, for instance, the obligation to return good for evil is often repeated by Indian moralists, and illustrated by Indian poets. “The Pandits, or learned Brahméns, recite,” says Sir William Jones, “the beautiful *Aryá*‡ couplet, written at least three centuries before our era, which pronounces

* The *Gita*, translated by Mr. WILKINS; The Institutes of *Menú*, by Sir W. JONES; also The *Hítópádésa*, consisting of a set of Apologues or Moral Fables; of which both these Sanscrit scholars have afforded a translation.

† *Menú*, chap. viii. v. 103, and 112.

‡ *Aryá* is the name of a particular kind of verse. As. Researches, Vol. II. No. 27.

the duty of a good man, even in the moment of destruction, to consist, not only in forgiving, but even in a desire of benefiting his destroyer; as the sandal-tree, in its overthrow, sheds perfume on the axe that fells it||."

But while the *Sástra* (for that is the name of the *Hindú* code of law, moral and religious) propounds this and other like precepts, calculated to train its disciples to the practice of every virtue, yet certain parts of that religious law, and especially such as have been composed in latter ages, contain a system of doctrines which in effect paralyzes every good precept, and encourages, almost directly, every vice. The *Sástra* tells its disciples, indeed, that their being emanated primarily from the Great Supreme; and that the soul of every man, be his nature what it may, will finally become perfected, and then absorbed into a glorious and happy union with that Great Eternal Spirit: but such consummation, it proceeds, will not be achieved till after many transmigrations of the soul into various bodies at various births, each more or less eminent, according as the duties of each preceding station may have been more or less perfectly discharged¹². To this tenet, which, by affording the prospect of a limited punishment, must certainly operate as no trifling encouragement to vice, another is added checking the growth of almost every virtue. The *Sástra* teaches, with all the extravagance of the predestinarian superstition, that men can only perform such virtuous actions as are suitable to the rank or class in which they are born; and that it is presumptuous for persons of lower birth to attempt, as it is impossible they should succeed in, the performance of virtues exclusively belonging to the higher orders, and especially to the class of the *Brahméns*.

|| JONES on the Philosophy of the Asiatics, Eleventh Discourse, (As. Res. Vol. IV.) where may be seen several other precepts calculated to convey a high opinion of the morality of the *Hindús*.

This pernicious doctrine is aided in the work of mischief by another, which may excuse the willing sinner from the practice even of those virtues allowed by the privileges of his class to be performed. It is taught, that actions termed good, can of themselves effect purification; or that an observance of the ritual law may effectually supply any omission, or atone for any violation, of the moral¹³. It is further taught, that ritual observances are of themselves virtuous, and undoubtedly competent to obtain for the obedient votary whatever he may desire, even final beatitude: it is even taught, that these cannot with safety be omitted, though moral observances may¹⁴. Hence it follows, that the *Hindú*, who will utter any falsehood without hesitation, can by no consideration be persuaded to taste forbidden food, or eat with impure or improper persons; and he who will defraud or rob without hesitation or remorse, will by no means neglect his oblations at the pagodas, or the expensive festivals in honour of their gods.

Such is the moral and such the religious code of the *Sástra*; and its disciples correspond to its rules. Their virtues are such as its precepts enjoin; their vices, such as those precepts either directly or indirectly allow. Behold, then, the pliant obedience of the *Hindú*. Observe how he willingly submits to whatever guide he may have learned to approve. This obedience shews, that whatever be the spots upon his character, they are rather owing to accidental than to natural stains. It affords therefore the sanguine hope, that were he to see and to learn purer principles, he would become more virtuous; that were he subjected to a better law, his faults would be amended; that however deformed and crippled his moral sentiment now may be, it would then be made to stand upright and to walk: for when the cause is removed, the effect must cease. How earnestly then is it to be wished, that men of such dispositions might but know the Gospel. What effects might not be hoped from a knowledge of their truths? for if the man now

bears some good fruit in defiance of the chilling influence of the noxious night-star under which he now abides, how would his virtues flourish, how would he bring forth fruit an hundred-fold, were he warmed and cherished by the Sun of Righteousness, bright with the beams of the Gospel of Truth.

The British, stationed as they now are on the banks of the Ganges, and there gaining access to the mysterious pages of the *Sástra*, may be said to have obtained admission behind the scenes of the theatre of Idolatry, and to have discovered the wires by which the mystagogues have been wont for ages to move the puppets of her mythologies, and at will to delight or awe, to astonish or perplex, the nations of the earth. Among the voluminous records of the *Sanscrit* literature, stored perhaps with much of that kind of knowledge which was burnt in the library of Alexandria, treatises have been discovered composed in ages widely distant, each containing clear and characteristic sketches of the religion and opinions of the times when they were composed. Detached portions only of those treatises have been as yet translated, or even studied, by Europeans; yet those have amply confirmed the opinions of the learned, hitherto only founded upon obscure hints and probable conjectures, that the idolatry of the heathen world arose from a corruption of the true religion; and further, that these corruptions took place, at least in India, by gradual and easy advances, proceeding at first from certain philosophical discriminations of the powers of nature, which by degrees came to be considered as distinct energies, then as distinct energies ruled by their peculiar personified agents, whom increasing error proceeded to represent by appropriate symbols, and to exalt, under a material form, as the objects of idolatrous worship.

The duties of my present office will not permit me to enter upon such a detailed account of the rise and progress of *Hindú* idolatry as the *Sanscrit* authorities might readily supply; since such an account

would be rather suited to the large contents of a volume, than to the time-bounded pages of a single discourse; yet a slight sketch must be offered, since it may serve to prove that the publication of the Scriptures translated into the Indian languages is a proper corrective for the errors of that religion, and one likely to work at least a partial, if not a perfect, cure of the malady, which at present afflicts, and has almost destroyed the spiritual life of the numerous nations of *Hindúst'han*.

Although the religion of the *Brahméns* seems, at the first glance, to be the most extravagant polytheism, it is in reality the worship of One God: for they teach, that there is one Great and Supreme Being, whom they call *Brahme*, or the *Great One*; that he existed anterior to all things; and that from him all things, the gods themselves not excepted, proceeded. Numerous extracts might be brought, would the time allow, to shew that the *Véda*, or the more ancient *Hindú* scriptures, describe this Being as forming the essence of all other deities, who are but his representatives and agents, “his million forms divine*”, over whom he is supreme. They describe him, in short, as omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and possessing all the attributes assigned by the first of the Articles of the Church of England to the true God¹⁵. This *Brahme*, the greatest of Beings, is never represented by any image or even emblem; nor is he worshipped with idolatrous rites, or even by any outward act of adoration¹⁶. The worship paid to him is purely spiritual, or intellectual; consisting chiefly in divine meditation, but sometimes by the suppressed utterance of the mystic *Om*¹⁷; a word never loudly spoken, and never in any manner used by the devout *Hindú*, except with the greatest solemnity, and after much and continued preparation. Such is the reverence shewn towards *Brahme*, their god of gods.

Had the religion of the *Brahméns* rested here, we might have almost owned their god as ours; but their busy invention could not be satisfied

* *Gita*, Lect. 10.

with the simplicity of truth; and they have deduced from the great *Brahme*, for the purpose, as they affirm, of gratifying and of aiding the worship of the ungifted vulgar, that monstrous polypus, their mythology. The first growth of the monster was, however, only single; for it is said that the supreme *Brahme* created, by his will or thought, another Being, named *Brahmá*, or the Creator¹⁸, because he possessed and diffused the active powers of creation. This *Brahmá* is not, however, the object of any religious honours; he is in a manner an obsolete deity. The *Brahmá* now adored is one of the personages of the celebrated *Hindú* triad, *Brahmá*, *Vishnú*, and *Síva*¹⁹, into which the original *Brahmá* was divided, for the acknowledged purpose of representing the creating, the preserving, and the destroying powers of nature²⁰.

These powers, though thus distinguished, were not however at first separated, but were worshipped as one; as is plain from the three-visaged Idol in the cave of Elephanta. But a distinction of powers soon did lead to a separation of the personified powers, and, in time, of their worship also. From this separation arose distinct and even rival sects; of which those who adore the beneficent preserving, or the terrible destructive powers, are the most numerous; the creator *Brahmá* being seldom the object of regard: so much do the hopes and fears of mankind prevail over their gratitude.

When man had once discovered the art of distinguishing the powers of the Deity, and worshipping them separate; and when he had farther proceeded to personify them, and to adore them in the form of emblematical idols or significative symbols, he had attained to all that was necessary for the purposes of polytheism, and his gods, and his idols, and his symbols, multiplied without ceasing. Every element of nature, and every object remarkable either for its utility or harm, was supposed to represent and to contain a distinct deity. Fire, air, earth, and water, the sun, the moon, the visible and invisible hemispheres of the heavens, were

personified and distinguished by the title of the Eight Chief Guardian Deities ; to these were added most of the heavenly bodies, especially the planets²¹. In process of time, eminent men were deified ; and when introduced into the crowded Pantheon, they claimed and received those honours of worship and sacrifice which were due to none but God²². It was thus, as we learn, not from probable conjecture, but from the written evidence of the *Véda*, that men transferred the worship of the Creator to the creature ; for while they bowed down before the visible object, the vulgar ceased to know, and even the learned often cared not to remember, what the enshrined idol was supposed to represent ; and that the stock or the stone was not the real God to whom the prayer was addressed, or for whom the oblation and the sacrifice were intended.

It must always happen, from the nature of things, that every advance made by those who are entered upon the path of error, leads the wanderers farther from the truth, and involves them more deeply in the mazes of falsehood and absurdity. This is particularly true with respect to the successive alterations made in the system of polytheism. Those philosophical investigations which had enabled the apostles of paganism to convert the powers or agents of nature into distinct personages, soon led to discriminations still more subtle respecting the powers themselves. It must have been readily perceived that effects were usually produced from primary by the intervention of secondary causes. This distinction the *Hindú* philosophers symbolically illustrated by an allusion to the animal system, calling the former male, the latter female, nature. As the powers of nature had been previously personified, they were henceforth personified with the distinction of sex, and the *Hindú* pantheon became doubled at once : for to every primary exciting power was annexed the corresponding excited efficient power, which, under the character of a female and a consort, represented what the *Sanscrit* terms the *Sactí*, or effective power of the husband God²³. Perhaps none of the inventions of man

have contributed more to the degradation of the character of the Deity than this arrangement: it converted the Supreme Creator and Governor of the World into an assemblage of Beings, male and female, differing only from human society in that they were supposed to possess a power somewhat greater than is the lot of mortals, and to enjoy the privilege of access at will to the mansions of heaven. The antiquity of this pernicious doctrine may be inferred, by observing that similar arrangements took place in the mysterious mythology of Egypt and of Syria, as also in the more familiar but equally mysterious mythologies of Greece and Rome.

In the corruptions which had hitherto been admitted, the liberal benevolent Christian will rather perceive cause for sorrow than detestation. The next stage, however, of the progress of idolatry, presents objects which the mind of purity must lothe, and the heart of devotion execrate. Those physiological enquiries which had so abundantly peopled the *Hindú* heavens with gods, seem to have led, very naturally perhaps, into some disputes concerning matter and spirit. According to the symbolical language of the *Puránás* (which are to the *Védas* what the Romish Legends are to our Sacred Scriptures) these disputes bore the form of a controversy concerning the degree of influence assignable to the active powers and passive qualities of nature, or, to express the question in language more nearly resembling that used by the *Puránás*, whether the male or female power was most effectually operative in the productions of nature. The contests of verbal disputants would be little likely to determine a question so fanciful; and in the present case the fire of debate seems to have lighted the flames of persecution; and those were followed, as usual, by all the mischiefs and miseries of war. In these evils all the nations, at least of the *Hindú* world, are said to have been involved, and by them all grievously suffered. The mischievous violence of the controversy seems to have at length, however, produced a compromise;

and it was agreed that an union of the two powers was best conducive to the most perfect production both of plants and animals²⁴.

It is easy to conceive, that a religious controversy concerning questions such as these must lead inevitably to the grossest enormities. They did produce the grossest enormities; and the history of the *Puránás* shews, under allegories too plain to be misunderstood, the extent of these evils; while the abominable emblems, still exalted in the pagodas of India, confirm the truth of their record²⁵. Licentiousness of manners, the natural consequence of a base and gross worship, is ever followed by the most unfeeling cruelty, and the most trembling superstition; and hence the religion of *Hindúst'han* became infamous, no less for the human blood shed in sacrifice, than for the obscene rites with which her deities were adored. The extent of country through which these abominations prevailed, may be estimated by observing, that what the idolatry of India once was, and what, with a single exception, it now is, may be described from the following charges brought by the prophet Ezekiel against the Jews of Palestine, relative to the same abominations: "Moreover, thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter? Thou hast slain thy children, and delivered them to pass through the fire for them. Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way; and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred; and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms." (Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. 25.) It is not to be denied, indeed, that the conquering sword, or the humane doctrines of the Indian *Búddha*, suppressed the horrid rites at least of human sacrifice; and, by a temporary victory over the authority of the *Brahméns*, has thrown an odium upon cruelty towards animals, which is often now carried to a troublesome excess²⁶. *Búddha*, however, though he corrected the cruelties of *Hindú* worship, rendered that of idols more direct and absolute; for an inscription

on a pillar erected by one of his disciples, declares that “ a crime of an hundred-fold shall be expiated by a sight of the idol of *Búddha* ; of a thousand-fold from a touch thereof ; of an hundred-thousand-fold from worshipping thereof²⁷.” This is indeed the extravagance of idolatry ; yet such an idolatry the *Brahméns* now use, and to this they have united all the obscene ceremonials of their former worship, which, with various degrees of enormity, according to the difference of sects, are now practised with full display, and form a most material part of every festive solemnity.

The facts now produced, and the allusions made relative to the idolatry of *Hindúism*, will, I trust, be found to compose a correct, though slight, sketch of a perplexing, because very multiform, system. Much additional explanation is indeed requisite to fill up the picture, but that the limits of a discourse from the pulpit forbids. Perhaps, however, the subject may be illustrated, sufficiently for the purposes of the present argument, by the following ready and not unapt comparison. — The religion of *Brahmá*, in its earliest state, may be said to have resembled a vast and spacious temple, simply majestic, and nobly grand ; built, perhaps, not exactly after the plan of the truest patriarchal models, yet differing from them only in a few particulars, and therefore not wholly unworthy of the great and only God. Fanciful distinctions, made by successive mystagogues, concerning the powers and attributes of that God, led his erring votaries to divide the spacious and noble fane into three compartments, for the purpose, as was imagined or pretended, of a more convenient worship, and more effectual use. The same principle led to a farther subdivision into eight parts, and again into others, which it is now become difficult to enumerate, and impossible to trace. By the very first alteration, the form of the original temple was destroyed ; the next rendered it difficult to perceive what it had been ; and succeeding alterations multiplied the perplexity, and confirmed the confusion. By these, moreover, the whole was formed into such a number of labyrinthical mazes, winding up and down, through halls,

and chambers, and vaults, that to find the way to the original, and once the only, altar, became a task which few were competent to undertake, and still fewer likely to accomplish. But farther, these endless subdivisions and alterations, made usually at random, at the suggestions of caprice, or from the designs of self-interest, not only disfigured, but rendered great part of the original temple useless, and even noxious; for much of it became converted into lonely chambers and foul recesses, “the abodes of owls and doleful creatures;” other parts became dreary dungeons, dark and dank, never cheered by any sunny ray, or purified by the sweet breath of heaven; fit therefore, indeed, and only fit, for their horrid inhabitants, the grisly phantoms of superstition, the hissing, writhing dragons of death.

From the foregoing statements of the religion and morality of the *Sastrá* it will have become most clearly evident, that the words of the text, addressed by St. Paul to the Athenians, “I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious,” are completely applicable to the *Hindús* of modern times; that they are indeed what the original language of my text calls, with somewhat more force than the translation, *δεῖσιδαίμονεσταιοί*, men worshipping, with all the slavish fears of the most gloomy superstition, a vast host of deities, who, notwithstanding they have been embodied into a multitudinous variety of strange forms, or signified by uncouth or extraordinary symbols, are yet but one god; and that, though scarcely known, is yet no other than the true God. It was such a conviction that stirred up the spirit of Paul, when he saw the city of Athens wholly given to idolatry. This urged him to exclaim openly, “Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” If Christians ought to imitate the examples of Christ and his Apostles, this act of Paul points out what is, under the circumstances of our present relation to India, the duty of the British nation. We ought to declare to the idolaters of those regions the Unknown God, whom they ignorantly worship. We ought to afford them the means of measuring back the tortuous track of error, by

opening to them the approaches to the fountain of Truth. But let me forbear to dwell upon arguments concerning duty, partly because they would lead too far from the present subject, and partly because they might seem to imply a doubt that the Learned Body I now address were indifferent to the main purposes of their institution, the care of the interests of Religion. I shall therefore pass onward, making only this one remark, that if the inhabitants of the British Isles should remain careless of the opportunity now offered them, of extending the knowledge of the faith of their Redeemer; and if, regardless of the religious welfare of those nations, which Providence has almost miraculously committed to their care, or over whom it has given them a weighty influence, if they should bend all their efforts to the idle sordid purpose of amassing wealth, to be spent at home in Europe with hurtful luxury and vain display; if to such a frivolous end alone they employ their superiority in arts and arms, they will then richly deserve that contemptuous title which the insolence of France is eager to impose upon them; they will then deserve to be called *a shop-keeping nation*, who, strangers to the influence of disinterested renown or Christian benevolence, live but to buy and sell, and who anxiously strive to occupy the whole earth, that they may convert it into one profitable mart, and thrive and fatten upon an universal monopoly.

The discussion of the means by which the duty of declaring the Unknown God may be best discharged, belongs rather to a general treatise on the propagation of the Gospel, than to a discourse on one of those means, the translation of the Scriptures: I shall therefore forbear to enter into questions relative to that subject. It must however be observed, that the sword of Islam has demonstrated, during a persecution of almost eight centuries, that the *Hindú* is not to be converted by force; and the little success attending the labours of many zealous and indefatigable missionaries must oblige us to acknowledge, that the eloquence

of preaching²⁸ (always rather calculated to water than to plant the faith of Christ) can hardly be hoped to produce any considerable or lasting effect upon the slow and cautious mind of the *Hindú*. Even the liberal and rational conversation of the accomplished Jones, though he was not by any means indifferent to the Christian cause, made not one convert among his *Brahmén* friends²⁹. If it be enquired why so little success has attended these endeavours, it must not be answered, as some are inclined to answer, that the *Hindús* are insuperably attached to their own opinions, and will not receive a new faith: the various sects among the disciples of *Brahmá*, and the conversion of the whole body of the Seiks to a religion nearly the reverse of *Hindúism*, forbid such a conclusion: the failure must be ascribed to the omission of that measure which I now speak to recommend, and which ought always to be considered as the first step preparatory to all others,—the publication of the Scriptures, translated into languages which the natives can read and understand.

Many arguments might be brought to confirm this opinion. The present occasion will however only permit me to observe, that the great body of our own nation was not converted, at the time of the Reformation, from the errors of popery, till they had enjoyed the happy privilege of a patient and continued perusal of the Bibles, laid publicly in our churches for that purpose. The same access to the sacred pages which was requisite for the conviction of our own countrymen, must at least be equally necessary among the natives of India: and it will most assuredly be idle to expect, that a race of men, of shrewd discernment and keen penetration, ingenious in argument, and delighting in its exercise, should forsake the ground on which their temples now stand, to enter within the pale of the Christian Church, until they have had the Scriptures long in their possession, and have been accustomed to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, and thus to acquire a habit of respecting their authority, and feeling their truth.

But if the religion of Christ, communicated to the *Hindú*, can only be learned by a patient perusal of our Holy Scriptures, translated and printed in the languages of his country, it must follow that the learned alone would be benefited by their translation; for the learned alone would be likely to read them. This circumstance, however, would not be injurious to the advancement of the Christian cause. If that cause ever triumph in India, it must owe its success to arguments which may convince the head, not to contrivances for securing the foot. The *Brahmén* must be gained, before the *Súdra* will be turned. To begin with attempting the conversion of persons of the lower classes would in all probability be injurious to the general success of the Christian cause: for the proud *Brahmén*, offended by observing the men he has been accustomed to lead anticipating him in the reception of the faith of the Gospels, would be apt to maintain, from prejudice, an obstinate persuasion that the religion of the Christian is fit only for the basest of mankind, for *Mlec'has* and *Caffres*; and that it is wholly unworthy the regard of men of higher birth, of nobler natural powers, and the more especial favourites of Heaven: for such are the opinions entertained by the higher classes, not only respecting foreign nations, but even the lower orders of *Brahmá's* kindred race. But the reverse would take place upon the conversion of a *Brahmén*. The religious superiority he is believed to possess above all other men; the abundant virtues supposed to be innate in his almost divine person; and, more than all, the awe and submission with which his decisions are usually received, would altogether form a host of argument in support of any opinion he might adopt: his conversion would therefore lead to the conversion of others, to an extent proportioned to his own personal influence and authority. The converted *Brahmén* might, indeed, be found to be the leaven hid in two measures of meal till the whole was leavened.

But will the translated Scriptures dispose the learned *Hindú* to receive the Gospel of Christ? This is a question which, after the preceding

statement of the rise of the religion of the *Sástra*, may be readily answered. The Scriptures *will* be likely to produce that effect. In the first place, the Indian student of our sacred code will, whenever he has learned to read it with attention, be inclined to receive it with favour; for he will there find many things calculated to remove his prejudices, and to win his assent. He will see in our Scripture history of the Creation an account not wholly different from his own, yet divested of many of those frivolous particulars which disfigure the narrative of the *Véda*. As he studied ours, he would find, surely not without some degree of approbation, that our God, a Being similar to his own Supreme *Brahme*, made the world; not by deputing the mighty and important work to any created Being, of a lower order, like the fabled *Brahmá* of *Hindúism*, who again portioned out the work to be executed by other subordinate agents, but that God himself was the Creator; for “He spake the word and it was made, He commanded and it was created:” and hence he will learn to think, that a Being thus powerful to create, must continue to rule the world he has created by his own almighty power and his own immediate energy. The clear statement of these doctrines afforded by our Scriptures would enable him to understand the obscure though respectful allusions made to them in the writings of the *Sástra*; and he would next learn rightly to interpret, and rightly to appreciate, the symbols of the *Védas*, and the idols of the *Puránás*. While, too, he examined their pretensions to the character of gods, he would perceive that the *Brahménical* system of distinct agents and a plurality of deities is but imaginary; and that even the *Sástra*, while it mentions them distinctly, considers them as one, and concurs in effect with the words of St. Paul to the Athenians, “This Creator and Governor is Lord of heaven and earth*.” The *Hindú* student of our Scriptures would hence infer, that it is an error to divide or subdivide the powers or qualities of the

* Acts xvii. 24.

Lord of the Universe into a multiplicity of deities, male and female; nay, further, that it is unjust and sinful to divert to a number of parts the worship and honour due to the whole, the sole omnipotent and omnipresent God. When he had learned thus much from our Scriptures, he would derive the strongest confirmation of these conclusions from his own. By tracing the *Brahménical* system through the *Puránás* and other like religious treatises, up to the ancient *Véda*, he would observe that the deities of the pagodas had been made many from one; that their difference of sex was evidently a symbolical representation of the powers of nature; and this would show at once, that all his former gods were nothing more; and that all of them stole their honours from the parent *Brahme*, the only deity whom the wisest of his own nation really worshipped, and the same in effect as the God of the Christians. Perceiving this, he would not fail to reject the *Sástra* system with scorn, and to abhor it, as the machination of priestcraft, artfully imposed upon enslaved ignorance³⁰.

Whenever the *Hindú* should have advanced thus far, his polytheism and idolatry would be no more. With the worship of idols would fall likewise the frivolous and abominable rites with which they are adored; and with those rites, the mistaken opinion that the ceremonious performance of these rites, and, by an easy inference, of any good action, may serve to atone for a committed sin; a principle not less hurtful to true morality in *Hindúst'han* than it was, and in some measure still continues to be, in the church of Rome. The Scriptures having thus taught the unity of the Deity, and the errors of idol worship, must have gained completely the confidence of the *Hindú* student; and he would be prepared to learn from them another of the precepts declared by St. Paul to the Athenians, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell upon the earth†." The Scripture history of the growth of

† Acts xvii. 26.

nations after the deluge, clear traces of which remain in the *Sanscrit* records, would likewise teach him to resign those groundless prejudices which persuade him to consider his own race as beings superior to the rest of mankind; a persuasion which reconciles him to those mischievous distinctions of class, which pride and oppression have cruelly created. With the distinction of class would be removed the strange and abominable doctrine, that men of the lower classes are not only exempted, but excluded, by the destiny of their birth, from the practice of the noblest virtues and purest piety. The doctrine also of the immortality of the soul, brought to light by the Gospel, and divested of the fanciful theory of transmigration, would free even the *Brahmén* from the dreaded apprehension of successive births; while, at the same time, the simple yet satisfactory doctrine of the Atonement and of a Mediator, would excuse him and all his race from the ceaseless observances of a tedious, troublesome ritual, and make him glad, by exchanging it for the liberty wherewith CHRIST hath made us free.

Such are the consequences to be expected from the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of Indian Asia: nor are these expectations called up by the fancy to be displayed on the present occasion, because they may suit the subject on which I address you. *No*: they are such as the character of the *Hindú*, and the rise, progress, and present state of his religion, all authorise us to entertain. It must not indeed be expected, that the wished-for change in the religious opinions of those nations will take place in an instant, or be effected without trouble. Before the translated Scriptures can be expected to produce any visible effect, they must lie long open to the cool and slow inspection of the Indian student; who will read them at first merely as objects of curiosity; and it is thus, perhaps, they may be expected to steal into his approbation, and win his assent, his esteem, his reverence, his belief. When the

crowds of *Brahméns* who live by the superstitious worship of the pagodas perceive this, they will doubtless attack the law of the Christian with all the arts of sophistry, falsehood, and furious opposition; but these, when the knowledge of Scripture has once taken root, will be vain. Their endeavours to suppress will give celebrity to the cause of Truth; which will triumph, as when Luther, and other apostles of the Reformation, drove from a great part of the Christian church of Europe idolatrous errors not less venerated and inveterate than is at present the idolatry of India; errors, supported by the monks of those times with a zeal and bigotry not less interested and furious than may perhaps be expected among numbers of the *Brahméns* of *Hindúst'han*.

But whatever may be the difficulties, whatever the discouragements attending the discharge of the duty of diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel, the Sacred Scriptures themselves assure us, that the blessing of Heaven shall attend all honest endeavours for that purpose, whatever be the age, or whatever the country, in which they may be made. To doubt this would be impious: for when our Lord, at his ascension, left to his Disciples the command, which is not less ours than theirs, “Go, and teach all nations to observe all things whatever I have commanded you*,” he added, (and *great* is the encouragement), “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

The kingdom of heaven, or the Christian Church, our Lord compares to a grain of mustard-seed, “which indeed is,” says he, “the least of all seeds; but which, when sown, becomes a mighty tree†,” extending its branches far and wide: And again, to a little leaven hid in three measures of meal, which by degrees leavened the whole mass. These teach that the Christian faith shall in time be established throughout the whole earth. And History most assuredly does confirm the obvious meaning of the parables just recited, and also of numerous other

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

† Ibid. xiii. 31—33.

prophecies of like import: it shows that the fostering hand of Heaven does guard and cherish the Gospel of Truth, which continually flourishes, and will flourish, under its care. Let it not therefore be esteemed a visionary fancy, to suppose that the Deity is at this present time preparing to bless new nations with the doctrines of salvation: nor let it be too hastily denied, that the inhabitants of these Isles, who profess the Christian faith in its purest forms, are the instruments intended to effect the merciful purpose. Let a benevolent zeal for the spiritual welfare of our fellow man lead also to the sanguine hope, that the times are not far distant when the following triumphant prophecy of Isaiah may be applied to India, as it has been to Europe: “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and upon them that dwelled in the shadow of death, on them hath a light shined*.” And let an honest love for the glory of our country form the hope, that some future Historian shall write, “It was chiefly through the Christian benevolence, the disinterested virtue, of a commercial nation, who transported their arms from the isles of Europe to the plains of *Hindûst’han*, rather to seek the olive of Peace than to win the laurel of Triumph, that this happy work was accomplished: for they instructed the nations in all their own useful arts; bade them know the wisdom of sound policy, and the observance of law; thus learning them to beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. But, above all, that people displayed, in the midst of the then heathen world, the Word of Truth, and declared to them the UNKNOWN GOD:—Then began ‘the wolf to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together†:’ for the persecuting and pillaging Mussulman; the patient, but obstinate, *Hindû*; the marauding Tartar, and the proud Chinese, though opposite in their habits, and enemies in their nature, were united in the bonds of Christian

* Isaiah ix. 2.

† Ibid. xi. 6.

love: — ‘ Then, indeed, did the wilderness and solitary place become glad for them, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose; for the eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame man leaped as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sang; for in the wilderness waters broke out, and streams in the desert || ;’ — waters, such as those promised at the well of Samaria, such as ‘ whosoever drinketh shall never thirst †,’ — the waters of the **GOSPEL OF ETERNAL LIFE !** ”

|| Isaiah xxxv.

† John iv. 14.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

(1) **THOSE** regions, sometimes distinguished by the name of India within the Ganges, are so completely separated from the rest of Asia by mountainous deserts and seas, as to be only accessible by armies through the provinces at the heads of the Indus. India has therefore always constituted an empire distinct from the rest of the world. When Shah Abbas of Persia was preparing to attack the dominions of the celebrated Aurengzebe, in revenge of a supposed insult, the Mogul Emperor observed, that the King of Persia could not have any rational wish for the conquest of *Hindúst'han*, since India and Persia were naturally so divided, that it was impossible the same prince should rule in both. By *Hindúst'han* is here understood the Gangetic provinces extended westward to the *Sind'h* or Indus: by India, the same, with the addition of the peninsula of the *Decán*. This distinction is authorised by the Institutes of *Menú*, (ch. ii. v. 19, &c.) The orthography of the word *Hindúst'han* is adopted upon the authority of that learned *Sanscrit* scholar, Wilford. In the present composition, the orthographical system of Sir William Jones is generally followed, (Vid. Jones on Asiatic Orthography) which appears to be at least the most convenient and complete of any hitherto offered, to direct writers who may have occasion to express Oriental words in European characters. It may be proper here to observe, that the Institutes of *Menú* are a collection of sentences containing the principles of the religion of the *Brahméns*, and rules for practice, both moral and religious. They are said to have been compiled above thirteen centuries before the Christian era, by an ancient legislator named *Menú*. As this work is the most authentic, and, at the same time, the most comprehensive treatise upon the *Hindú* Law at present in the possession of Europeans, it is surprising that more use has not been made of it by such of our authors as have undertaken to treat of the religion of *Brahmá*. The *Gita* is a moral treatise, forming an episode in the *Hindú* epic poem called the *Mahábarat*.

(2) “By an official enquiry,” writes Dr. Tennant, the author of the work entitled *Indian Recreations*, (vol. II. sect. 1.) “made in the district of *Purnea*, there were found 70,914 *Ryuts*, holding leases; 22,324 artificers, paying ground rent, in 2,784 villages, upon an area of 2,531 square miles: allowing the number of five to a family, this gives about 2,003 to a square mile. The whole provinces in this Presidency (*Bengál* and *Bahár*) contains

162,500 square miles, and, by this estimate, a population of nearly thirty-three millions. In the district there are a few lands, amounting to one-eighth part of the whole, that are not included ; nor are the inhabitants of any city or considerable town. Although, therefore, one-eighth part of *Bengál* be allowed for waste land, this calculation will apply to it without much deduction." Perhaps the proportion of one-eighth part of the country for waste and water is too small ; and indeed, in some cases, the waste has been found to be one-fourth of the whole ; but yet four other estimates, made upon different grounds, each liable to only very slight objections, afford results supporting the above calculation of the population of *Bengál* and *Bahár*. (Vid. *Indian Recreations*, as above.) The population of our provinces in the *Decán* is estimated at eighteen or twenty millions. In all probability, therefore, fifty millions rather falls short of, than exceeds, the amount of the population of our possessions in India.

(3) According to the Memoir on the subject of an Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, " there are six military chaplains for *Bengál*, *Báhar*, *Oude*, the *Dúab*, and *Orissa* ; three for *Cálcutta*, five at *Madras*, and four at *Bombay*. Of these only two-thirds are, upon an average, effective. When this number of ministers is compared with the population in the preceding Note, the declaration, made by the author of the *Indian Recreations*, that the generality of the *Hindús* know of no other religion than those of *Brahmá* and Mahomet, may be readily believed. And when it is also remembered, that to such a small number of ministers is left the care of districts amounting in extent to perhaps 200,000 square miles, the following assertion of the same author will not seem improbable. " Many persons have left England at an early age, and resided in India perhaps for twenty or thirty years, without once having heard divine service till their return." (*Ind. Rec.* vol. I. sect. 11.)

(4) " All the Indians are free ; nor is any Indian a servant ; and this is exactly the same with the Indians and Lacedemonians. The Helotes alone are their servants, and perform all servile acts ; nor have the Indians any other kind of servants, and by no means an Indian." (*Arrian. de Indicis.*) He also speaks of regal and popular governments. Abundant testimonies to the same purpose may be seen in Maurice's History of *Hindúst'hán*.

(5) However respectful and obedient the *Hindus* may be toward their superiors, yet their animosities and quarrels with each other are frequent and violent. They do not, indeed, often proceed to acts of personal violence ; but, says the author of the *Indian Recreations*, " Two persons, between whom a misunderstanding subsists, will stand, when they meet, upbraiding each other for an hour, to the great annoyance of the neighbourhood, with every foul epithet of abuse, attended with the most furious gesticulation." It appears from the Institutes of *Menú* (ch. viii. ver. 269—277) that this kind of contest is not forbidden to the lowest orders, and only slightly censured when practised by the highest ; but to inflict a blow or a wound, is a sin, and an act to which severe punishment is usually annexed. In the Carnatic, however, these kind of disputes frequently assume a more serious form, and often amount to a complete breach of the peace. (Vide Buchanan's Journey into the Mysore, &c.)

(6) Dr. Tennant observes, that when chokedars, or watchmen, who are either thieves or connected with them, are employed to guard fields and gardens, the fruits are safe ; but unless they be employed, no contrivance can prevent the most vexatious depredations. (Ind. Rec. vol. I. sect. 34.)

(7) *Menú*, ch. v. On Diet and Purification. Of the perplexities of ablution the following rules may afford a specimen : A *Brahmén* rising from sleep is enjoined, under the penalty of losing the benefit of all rites performed by him, to rub his teeth with a proper withe, pronouncing a prayer, and to rinse his mouth twelve times. This done, the withe is to be thrown away in a place free from impurities, and he must proceed to perform his morning ablutions. These begin with sipping water, and sprinkling it before him, with prayers inaudibly pronounced ; then by casting it eight times on his head, or toward the sky ; and lastly on the ground. Then, thrice plunging into the water, using expiatory texts, he must wash his mantle, and sit down and worship the rising sun. This worship consists of a course of devotion much more long and intricate than the ablutions which precede it. The rites of ablution must be again performed at noon, with nearly the same observances as at the morning. The prayers or texts used are then somewhat different, and the votary swims three circuits toward the south, to avert the displeasure of *Varuna*, King of waters, at the impiety of mankind in crossing the seas, which are called his fetters. Various other ceremonies are introduced, on certain occasions, at these mid-day ablutions ; and part of these must be repeated at evening, if the votary belong to any of the religious orders. (As. Res. vol. V. No. 22.)

(8) The public and domestic worship of the *Hindús* may be said to be regulated by the same rules : that, however, which is performed at the temples, requires fewer preparatory acts than that at private houses. Every meal is properly a sacrifice, and always ought to be, and usually is, attended with particular rites. (*Menú*, ch. iii.) The following account of the occasions in which *s'radd'has*, or religious rites, ought to be performed, may convey some idea of their general nature. “ I find,” writes Mr. Colebrooke, (As. Res. vol. VII. No. 8.) “ authority for classing obsequies, *i. e.* sacrificial worship, under twelve heads, &c.

1. Daily obsequies, either with food or with water only, in honour of ancestors in general, but excluding the *Vis'wédéva*.
2. Obsequies for a special cause, that is, in honour of a kinsman recently defunct.
3. Voluntary obsequies, performed by way of supererogation, for the greater benefit of the deceased.
4. Obsequies for increase of prosperity, performed upon any accession of wealth or prosperity, or upon any joyful occasion.
5. A *s'radd'ha* intended to introduce the shade of a deceased kinsman to the rest of the manes.
6. Obsequies performed on appointed days, such as that of the new moon, full moon, sun's passage into a new sign, &c.
7. A *s'radd'ha* to sanctify food at an entertainment given to a company of reverend persons.
8. One performed when a stated number of priests are fed at the cost of a person who needs purification from some defilement.
9. A *s'radd'ha* preparatory to the celebration of any solemnity, and considered as a part of such rite.
10. *S'radd'has* in honour of deities.
11. Oblations of clarified butter, previous to the undertaking of a distant journey.
12. A *s'radd'ha* to sanctify a meal of flesh meat, prepared simply for the sake of nourishment.” Thus are the rites of religion introduced into every transaction

of the *Hindú*; and their variety must be attended with a perplexity which the *Brahmén* himself can scarcely regulate or explain.

(9) See Stavorinus's account of a *Hindú* festival, at which he himself was present. According to the Institutes, he who gives all his wealth at a sacred rite is enumerated among men of the most perfect virtue. (*Menú*, ch. xi. v. 2, 3.) It is but just to remark, that the indecencies of these festivals consist chiefly in the dances of the *Bayaderes*, or dancing girls; and are practised from religious motives by them, before the idols set up on these occasions. In the gestures of these dances, which form the general amusement of all the Asiatics, may be perceived the *motus Ionici*, which the poet Horace mentions, (*Carm. Lib. III. Od. 6.*) as admired, and even practised, by the degenerate ladies of Rome.

(10) The *Méla*, or Fair, held at the *Hurdwar* on the river Ganges, about the vernal equinox, is commonly attended by above two millions of pilgrims; whole families visiting the place at that season, from the remotest parts of India; often from distances exceeding twelve hundred miles. (*As. Res. vol. VI. No. 9.*) The Institutes of *Menú* prescribe pilgrimages, by way of penance, of four hundred miles, and sometimes to the remotest parts of India. (*Menú*, ch. viii. v. 76, 78.) *Yogís*, or persons of the religious orders, often perform pilgrimages under circumstances attended by the severest mortifications. A *Yogí* of the order of *Sannyassi* visited every part of *Hindúst'han*, and most part of Western Asia, and even reached the Russian capital of Moscow. He performed his travels with his arms squared and held above his head, agreeably to the penance he had adopted. This extraordinary person, in the latter years of his life, received a pension or jaghire from Governor Hastings, and died very lately at *Benáres*. (*As. Res. vol. V. No. 2.*) The austerities practised by many of these *Yogís*, or religious devotees, are often such as to have justly excited wonder and astonishment in Europeans. For the rules of these *Yogís*, vide *Menú*, chap. ii. & vi.

(11) "By *Brahméns*," says *Menú*, (ch. vi. v. 91, 92,) "placed in their four orders, a tenfold system of duties must ever be sedulously practised. Content, returning good for evil, resistance to sensual appetites, abstinence from illicit gain, purification, coercion of the organs, knowledge of scripture, knowledge of the supreme spirit, veracity, and freedom from wrath, form their tenfold system of duties." This passage contains the essence of whatever is excellent in morality, and, as far as it relates to the ritual of the *Sástra*, of religion also. It must however be observed and lamented, that these duties are prescribed to *Brahméns* only, and are not obligatory to the other classes; for the chapters of the Institutes respecting the performance of moral and religious duties are closed by an observation, in which they are termed a "fourfold regulation for the sacerdotal class." (*Menú*, ch. vi. v. 97.)

(12) *Menú* writes, (ch. i. v. 14, 15.) "From the supreme soul he (viz. the creator *Brahmá*) drew forth mind existing substantially, though unperceived by sense, immaterial; and before mind, or the reasoning power, he produced consciousness, the internal monitor, the

ruler ; and before them both he produced the great principle of the soul, or first expansion of the divine idea." In the next verse, these, with some others, are called "emanations from the Supreme Spirit." As having existed thus in the nature of the spirit, the soul is said in the *Gita* (Lect. 2.) to be "a thing without birth, ancient, constant, eternal, not to be destroyed." In the same work, *Crishna*, speaking in the character of the Supreme Being, observes, (Lect. 9.) "At the end of the period called *calpa*, all things return into my primordial source." But the eminently virtuous may attain to this union or absorption with the divine nature at an earlier period ; and frequent mention of the kinds or degrees of virtue efficient of this happy union, or *múcti*, as it is called, are mentioned both in the *Gita* and the Institutes. "But," says the *Gita*, (Lect. 7.) "even the wise man proceedeth not unto me till after many births." A minute account of the various conditions of the soul till it obtains the *múcti*, may be seen in the twelfth chapter of the Institutes of *Menú*.

(13) "All these different kinds of worshippers are, by their particular modes of worship, purified from their offences." (*Gita*, Lect. 5.) It is farther declared, (ib. Lect. 9.) "If one whose ways are ever so evil, serve me alone, he is as respectable as the just man ; he is altogether as well employed ; he soon becometh a virtuous spirit, and obtaineth eternal happiness." Similar opinions result from the general tenor of the Institutes of *Menú*. The most enormous offences may be expiated by acts of religious austerity or penance, which, however, in many instances, may be commuted for by fines and penalties. (Vid. *Menú*, ch. xi.)

(14) *Menú* writes, (ch. iii. v. 72.) "The man who cherishes not the five orders of Beings," by which is understood the due performance of religious rites, "lives not, even though he breathe." Such neglect, or scorn, is ascribed in the *Gita* to the *Tama Gúna*, or principle of darkness, and subjects the offender to various degrees of punishment. (Vide *Gita*, Lect. 18.)

(15) "The deities are only three," says the *Rigvéda* ; "but in fact there is only one deity, The Great Soul." On this and other passages the author of the Essay on the Sacred Writings of the *Hindús* (As. Res. vol. VIII. No. 8.) observes, "The ancient *Hindú* religion, as founded on the Indian scriptures, recognizes but one God, yet not sufficiently discriminating the creature from the Creator." According to *Menú*, "In the knowledge and adoration of one God, which the *Véda* teaches, all the rules of good conduct, before mentioned in order, are fully comprised." (Ch. xii. v. 87.) The same author speaks of this one God, as "the sole self-existing power ; he whom the mind alone can perceive ; whose essence eludes the external organs ; who has no visible parts ; who exists from eternity ; even the soul of all beings ; whom no being can comprehend." (Ch. i. v. 6, 7.) Sir W. Jones compares these doctrines of the *Véda* with those of the first of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. (Vide Jones's Works, vol. VI.)

(16) In the thirty-second lecture of the *Sama-Véda*, (As. Res. vol. VIII. No. 8.) it is said, speaking of BRAHME, "Of him, who is so great, there is no image:" and in the *Gita* (Lect. 8.) the worship to be paid to him is described in the following words: "He who, having closed

up all the doors of his faculties, locked up his mind in his own breast, and fixed his spirit in his head, standing firm in the exercise of devotion, repeating in silence O'M, the mystic sign of BRAHME, shall, on quitting his mortal frame, calling upon me without doubt, go the journey of supreme happiness." According to *Menú*, (ch. vi. v. 70.) "Three suppressions of breath made according to the divine rule, accompanied with the triverbal phrase *Bhur bhúva swah*, and the trilateral syllable *O'm*, may be considered as the highest devotion of a *Brahmén*."

(17) "The letter A, the letter U, and the letter M, form," (says *Menú*, ch. ii. v. 76.) "by their coalition, the trilateral monosyllable." This, however, Sir W. Jones, the translator of the Institutes of *Menú*, always writes *O'm*, though his rules for pronunciation direct that it should be spoken as though it were written *aum*. The solemnities which ought always to precede the pronunciation of this word are thus prescribed by *Menú*, (ch. ii. v. 75.) "If he have sitten on culms of *cúsa* (a sacred grass) with their points toward the east; and be purified by rubbing that holy grass on both his hands; and be further prepared by three suppressions of breath, each equal in time to five short vowels; he may then fitly pronounce *O'm*."

(18) "In that egg," says *Menú*, meaning the celebrated mundane egg, "he (*Brahmé*) was born himself in the form of *Brahmá*, the great forefather of all spirits." (Ch. i. v. 9.) Again, "From that which is the first cause, not the object of sense, existing every-where in substance, not existing to our perception, without beginning or end, was produced the divine male, famed in all worlds under the appellation of *Brahmá*." (Ib. v. 11.)

(19) The production of the *Hindú* Triad is thus related upon the authority of the *Brahméns*. (As. Res. vol. V. No. 18.) "*Brahmá* created three great *Rajahpátis*, *Cardama*, *Dacsha*, and *Ruchi*. *Cardama* is acknowledged to be a form of *Síva*, or *Síva* himself: *Dacsha* to be *Brahmá*, hence he is often called *Dacsha Brahmá*. And we may reasonably conclude, that the benevolent *Ruchi* was equally a form of *Vishnú*. *Dacsha Brahmá* issued mystically from his navel, *Vishnú* from his left, and *Síva* from his right side." The mystical origin of these personages proves their allegorical nature; or, that they rather represent qualities than persons. Dr. Buchanan, in his journal of a journey through Mysore, informs us, and his information is the result of the most careful investigation, that the *Brahméns* of the Carnatic "consider *Brahmá*, *Vishnú*, and *Síva*, to be the same god, assuming different persons, as the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer, of the universe. And some of them think *Vishnú* to be the father of *Brahmá*, and *Brahmá* to be the father of *Síva*." (Buchanan's Journey, vol. I. ch. i.) The worshippers of *Síva* reverse this order, making *Síva* the father of *Brahmá*, and *Brahmá* of *Vishnú*. These several allegories may be explained by references to the various powers and energies of Nature. The personages introduced into these allegories are merely symbols, or fanciful characters; and to consider them as real, will always be productive of perplexity and confusion. This observation equally applies to the gods of Greece, Egypt, and Syria. The adoration of idols having three faces or heads, has not been peculiar to India: the author of the Indian Antiquities has exhibited specimens of the same, found in Japan, Siberia, and Gaul.

(20) The physiological nature of idolatry, at least of the idolatry of the *Hindús*, may be easily inferred from the various prayers and invocations recited in their devotional solemnities. Of those, the *Gayatrí* is a prayer of such comprehensive meaning, that it is called the mother of the *Véda*; by which we are to understand, that it is the essence of those sacred books, and that the whole of their doctrines may be deduced from it. This celebrated prayer is translated as follows by the learned Colebrooke, in his Essay on the *Védas* or Sacred Writings of the *Hindús*. (As. Res. vol. VIII. p. 389.) “Let us meditate upon the adorable light of the Divine Ruler. May it guide our intellects!” This passage, which is found in the *Rích*, or oldest *Véda*, is an address which might be acceptable to the true God. A meaning, however, truly physiological, is given to it in the following commentary, translated, by the author above named, from an ancient *Sanscrit* treatise. “That effulgent power which governs our intellects, is the primitive element of water, the lustre of gems and other glittering substances, the savour of trees and herbs, the thinking soul of living beings; it is the creator, preserver, and destroyer, the sun and every other deity, and all which is fixed in the three worlds, named earth, sky, heaven.” (As. Res. vol. V. No. 22.) In an extract from an *úpanishad*, or theological treatise annexed to the *Sama-véda*, the various objects of religious worship are stated, and these are all natural objects. “Heaven, the sun, air, the ethereal element, water, and earth, are adored by different sages:” but it is farther taught in the same treatise, that the proper object of worship is the *universal soul*, known by its manifested portions, and inferred from consciousness. (As. Res. vol. VIII. No. 8.) That such are the general doctrines of the *Véda*, will appear from the following passage from *Menú*. “Him” (the Supreme omnipresent Intelligence) “some adore as transcendently present in elementary fire; others in *Menú*, Lord of Creatures, or an immediate agent in creation; some as more distinctly present in *I’NDRA*, regent of the clouds and the atmosphere; others in pure air; others in the most High Eternal Spirit.” (*Menú*, ch. xii. v. 123.) These documents, and many others of like purport, which might be adduced, clearly indicate the physical character of the religion of *Brahmá*, and proves, contrary to the opinion of that eminent mythologist Mr. Bryant, that the sun, at least with the *Hindús*, and probably with other heathen nations, was not the sole or principal object of idolatrous worship. This, indeed, might easily be shewn by many passages from his own justly celebrated work upon the religion of the heathen world. It will however be right to observe, that among the *Hindús* there is a sect, not very numerous indeed, called *Sauryas*, who, like the Egyptians and Persians, principally or exclusively worship the sun. It was, perhaps, by contemplating the religion of the Egyptians and Persians, who seem to have been what the *Brahmén*s would term *Sauryas*, that the above-named writer was led to adopt his hypothesis concerning the solar worship; which is only true in part.

(21) These eight deities are subordinate to the deities of the triad. Their names and several powers are enumerated by *Menú*, (chap. vii. ver. 4, 5; and chap. ix. ver. 303 to 311.) and are as follows. *Agní*, the regent of fire; *Varúna*, of the waters; *Cuvéra*, or *Prithiví*, of the earth; *Pavana*, of the air, or wind; *Chandra*, of the moon; *Súrya*, of the sun; *I’ndra*, of the sky, or visible hemisphere; and *Yama*, of the south, or lower hemisphere, supposed to be the abode of departed spirits. These are called the Guardian Deities, because they are feigned to be constantly seated on elephants, watching

for the safety of the city of *Cási* or *Bénares*, and other holy places of *Iambú-dwipa*, one of the eight regions, or islands, into which the earth is said, by the *Brahméns*, to be divided. (Jones on the *Hindú* Zodiac.) It is a very remarkable fact, and one which proves the connection or resemblance between the various mythologies of the heathen world, that the Egyptians had their eight deities so closely resembling those of the *Hindús*, that they must be said to be the same. The learned Jablonski, in his *Pantheon Egyptiorum* (Proleg. sect. 28.), after much diligent investigation of the subject, writes, “*Nam Diodorus primó a diis cœlestibus æternis distinguit deos octo, tanquam illi composuerint secundum in choro deorum ordinem;*” words which might be applied to describe the eight guardian deities of the *Hindús*. In his various quotations made to ascertain the names of their deities, the following, taken from the Orphic verses, contains a list exactly the same as that given above from *Menú*:

Ναι μην αθανατων γεννητορας αιεν εοντων,
 Πυρ και Ύδωρ, Γαιαντε και Ουρανον, ηδε Σεληνην,
 Ηελιοντε Φανητα* μεγαν, και Νυκτα μελαιναν.

It does not appear that the planets were noticed, except upon extraordinary occasions, in the religious worship of the *Brahméns*. The planet Jupiter is esteemed the most important of all; and its periodic time seems to have been one of the elements of their principal cycles. Their mythology reports, that this planet is under the governance of an eminent sage, named *Vrihaspati*, who is celebrated for his eloquence, and said to have been the preceptor, and, occasionally, the ambassador of the Gods. (Jones's Hymn to *Dúrga*.)

(22) The mythology of the *Brahméns* was confined to the personification of the elements and planets, till the later ages of the institutions of *Brahmá*. The deifications of heroes is not mentioned in the three first *Védas*, (Colebrooke on the *Védas*, As. Res. vol. VIII. No. 8.) nor yet in the Institutes of *Menú*, which, according to the calculation of Sir W. Jones, were compiled at least eleven centuries before the Christian era: it is mentioned, however, in the *Púránas*; and seems to be an acknowledged doctrine of the *Gíta*, composed by *Vyása* about a thousand years before our Saviour. Various circumstances gradually led to this extraordinary institution: first, the oblations offered to the manes of the *Pitrís*, or departed ancestors; secondly, the belief that virtuous actions may possibly advance the good man after death, to the rank of even *Brahmá* himself (*Menú*, ch. xii. v. 50.); and lastly, the doctrines of the *Avataras*, according to which, the deity, generally *Vishnú*, is believed to be born into the world, and to assume a bodily shape, for the purpose of promoting good, and repressing evil. Of these *Avataras* there are various

* Those who concur with Bryant in the opinion that Φανης (Phanes) is *Pi-Hanes*, or *Pi-ain-eis*, the fountain of light, and hence the same as *Our-ain* and *OURANUS*, (Vide Myth. vol. I. p. 200.) will without hesitation allow that *I'ndra*, the god of the starry firmament, is the same personage as the *Phanes* of the Orphic verses.

degrees or kinds. That the doctrines of *Brahmá* may not appear singularly extravagant, it may be proper to observe, that a similar belief prevailed among the Romans relative to the Genius which attended every man at his birth : and when Horace wrote “ Augustus præsens divus habebitur,”* his flattery, however extravagant it may appear to ourselves, was nothing more than what the *Brahméns* had long taught, and what the Romans had long been accustomed to believe. It is the opinion of the learned Jablonski, that the Egyptians did not worship deified heroes: “ Quæ hic ad nos spectant, eo redeunt, ἀποθειωσιν Græcis adeo familiarum Ægyptiis penitus incognitum esse ; neque concedere eos quenquam fuisse inter reges suæ gentis, qui post mortem honores divinos consecutus sit.” (Panth. Æg. Proleg. § 18.) He affirms the same with regard to the Persians. If these his opinions be true, as they certainly are probable, it follows that the religion of Greece and Rome was more nearly related to the superstition of the Ganges, than those of the Nile or Persepolis.

(23) It appears sufficiently evident from the Institutes of *Menú*, our surest guide among the contending dogmas of the books of the *Sástra*, that the male deities were supposed to have existed before the female, and to have effected the first operations of creation. (*Menú*, ch. i. v. 32, 33, 34.) But that the female deities were introduced very early in the system, is not only probable from the nature of the doctrines themselves, but certain from the evidences of the *Véda* (As. Res. vol. VIII. No. 8.); from the Institutes of *Menú* (ch. iii. v. 86. 89 ; and ch. viii. v. 105.); and from the principles taught in the *Gíta* (Lect. 13.) That this separation of powers was gradual, may be inferred from the other fabled assignment of a double sex in the same deity ; an union, not only frequently represented in the pagodas of modern India, but is mentioned in their earliest writings. According to *Menú*, (ch. i. v. 32.) “ *Viraj*, the first agent in the creation, became half male, half female.” *Pthas*, the first principle of creation, according to the Egyptian mythology, was also both male and female, (Jablonski, lib. I. cap. ii.); and Bryant produces various instances of the same from that of the Greeks and Latins. One author calls Jupiter the mother of the gods :

“ Jupiter omnipotens Regum Rex ipse Deumque,

“ Progenitor *Genetrixque* Deum ; Deus unus et idem.” †

Another writes,

Συ πατηρ, συ δ' εσσι μητηρ,

Συ δ' αρσεν, συ δε θηλυς. ‡

The extensive reading of the celebrated mythologist has enabled him to bring from the recondite recesses of literature, several other passages of the like import, which the Reader may find (Myth. vol. I. p. 314.) Whenever the double sex is attributed to the same deity, the superior power of the ἀρσενιοθηλυς, the male-female god, seems always to be implied.

* Carm. Lib. III. Od. 5.

† Augustin. de Civitate Dei. lib. iv. c. 11.

‡ Synesius, Hymn 3.

(24) The documents relative to this subject will be found in the treatise upon Egypt and the Nile, given in the Asiatic Researches (vol. III. No. 13.) Though, owing to the frauds practised upon the author of that treatise, the materials of which it is composed cannot be pronounced genuine, yet he maintains, upon good grounds, that they are true. (As. Res. vol. VIII. No. 8.) The reality of these controversies, and all their attendant mischiefs, may be inferred from the opinion of the mythologist Bryant, that the war between the Gods and Titans was a similar contest concerning a religious question ; for that it was in reality nothing more than a dispute, evidently sufficiently violent, between the priests of the ancient Ophite or Serpent worship, and those of the sect which is now known by the name of Grecian. He shews also, that the victory of Apollo over Python consisted in the establishment of the authority of his oracle above that of the Serpent god. (Bryant's Myth. vol. I. p. 432.) " It is," says Mr. Wilford, " the opinion of the compilers of the *Púrânas*, that the *Linga* or phallus was first worshipped by the name of *Baliswâra-linga*, on the banks of the *Camúdvati* or Euphrates," (As. Res. vol. III. as above,) and probably before the dispersion at Babel, to which event these disputes may possibly have contributed. Many of the emblems of antiquity, which Mr. Bryant supposes to refer to what he calls the Arkite worship, (such as Osiris sitting in a boat,) we may rather refer, with Mr. Wilford, to the compromise of the sexual question, intimated by many other emblems mentioned in his treatise above mentioned ; and we may perhaps venture to affirm, that had the eminent mythologist possessed the various documents lately transmitted from the banks of the Ganges, he would have adopted this opinion upon the not obscure evidence of the writings of the *Sâstra*.

(25) Of these, Robertson, in his Disquisition concerning India, writes as follows : " In no part of the earth was a connection between the gratification of sensual desire, and the rites of public religion, displayed with more avowed indecency, than in India. In every pagoda there was a band of women set apart for the service of the idol honoured there, and devoted from their early years to a life of pleasure ; for which the *Brahméns* prepared them by an education, which added so many accomplishments to their natural charms, that what they gained by their profligacy, often brought no inconsiderable accession to the revenue of the temple. In every function performed in the pagodas, as well as in every public procession, it is the office of these women to dance before the idol, and to sing hymns in his praise ; and it is difficult to say whether they trespass most against decency by the gestures they exhibit, or by the verses which they recite. The walls of the pagoda are covered with paintings, in a style no less indelicate ; and in the innermost recess of the temple, for it would be profane to call it the sanctuary, is placed the *Lingam*, an emblem of productive power, too gross to be explained." (Appendix.) After these accounts, it ought, in justice to the *Hindú* character, to be observed, that no practice similar to those called the offering of the *Pitura*, (vide Bryant's Myth. vol. I. p. 300 ; and Apocrypha, Baruch, ch. vi. v. 43.) are to be found among the ordinances of *Brahma*. Concerning the rules for sanguinary sacrifice, including the ceremonies to be observed on the immolation of human victims, see the chapter translated from the *Cálíca Púrâna*. (As. Res. vol. V. No. 23.)

(26) *Búddha*, who is generally believed to have reformed the savage rites of the ancient *Hindús*, is considered as the ninth *ávatár*, or descent of *Vishnú* in person. The age of his appearance is usually referred to the eleventh century before the Christian era. (Jones on the Chronology of the *Hindús*.) The force of his arms is supposed to have effected more than the strength of his argument; but whatever were the means used by him, he seems to have overthrown the religion of the *Brahméns*, and to have established his own system throughout all Eastern Asia. After some considerable interval, the *Brahméns* gradually recovered their influence over *Hindúst'han* and the *Décan*, and the *Baudhas* are now heretics in India. The religion of *Búddha* prevails, however, over a greater portion of the world than any other, the Christian not excepted: for *Búddha* is honoured as the *Buda* of the inhabitants of Japan; the *Pooth*, *Pood*, or *Poo*, of the Siamese; the *Fohi*, or *Fo*, of China; and the *Gaudima*, or *Gotama*, of the *Cingalese* and *Burmas*.

It is hoped that the statements contained in the preceding notes will acquaint the Reader with so much of the *Hindú* doctrines and mythology, as may enable him to appreciate the arguments offered in the Discourse. The Author is sensible that a more ample account of these subjects might have been offered with more effect, but the mass already produced seems an appendage almost too ponderous for the composition to which it is attached. He wishes to observe, that, upon most of the subjects already mentioned, he had, previous to the writing of this Discourse, composed, from the best materials already transmitted from India, several dissertations, containing a more detailed account of the religion of the *Sástra*, and its influence on the manners of the *Hindús*, together with occasional references to the doctrines and tenets of other heathen nations, both ancient and modern. Whether it may ever be advisable to offer these dissertations to the public, circumstances yet to happen can alone decide.

(27) The above inscription bears the date of the year 1005 of the era of *Vicrámaditya*, which corresponds with the year 926 of the Christian era. (As. Res. vol. I. No. 11.) From this inscription, which contains many other expressions and sentiments similar to those given as above, it plainly appears that the absurdities of *Hindúism* had, at the time above mentioned, reached their *acme*; and the iniquity of its votaries, like that of the Amorites, on their invasion by Israel, may be said to have been full. It may be remarked also, that in less than a century after the above date, “the star of Islam,” to use an expression of the historian *Ferishta*, began to shine upon, and to desolate, the plains of *Hindúst'han*. From that period the priests of *Brahmá* seem to have had no longer leisure to imagine and introduce new errors into their worship: they became fully occupied with endeavours, continued with the most persevering obstinacy, to maintain their tenets against the most violent persecutions, to which they have been almost uninterruptedly exposed from the zeal and bigotry of the Mahometans.

(28) The author of the Indian Recreations writes, (vol. I. sect. 22.) “Excepting a few of the *Pariah* tribe in the neighbourhood of *Madras*, who are sometimes seen listening to the discourses of the Missionaries with much greater appearance of wonder than of intelligence,

the apostles of the East cannot boast of having gained to their society even those unfortunate *Hindús*, who have been debarred all communication with the rest of mankind." This indifference even in them he ascribes to a total ignorance, and an habitual estrangement from all mental exertion. Upon total ignorance, he justly observes, truth has no power. The eagerness with which some of the *Hindús* now ask for Bibles, may be properly ascribed to a desire of knowing what is the religion of their Christian rulers. This desire may be productive of the most extensive and important benefits.

(29) The following remarks of Sir W. Jones may at once serve to restrain within due bounds the over-sanguine expectations of the zealous friends for the propagation of the Gospel, and, at the same time, to invite those who are apt to despair of success in any undertaking for that purpose, to promote the translation of the Scriptures into the Indian languages. "We may assure ourselves," says the chief judge of Bengal, "that neither Mussulmen nor *Hindús* will ever be converted by any mission from the church of Rome, or from any other church. The only human mode, perhaps, of causing so great a revolution, will be to translate, into *Sanscrit* and Persian, such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of Isaiah, as are indisputably evangelical; together with one of the gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse, containing full evidence of the very distant ages in which the predictions themselves, and the history of the divine person predicted, were severally made public; and then quietly to disperse the work among the well-educated natives; with whom, if in due time it failed to produce any salutary fruit by its natural influence, we could only lament, more than ever, the strength of prejudice, and the weakness of unassisted reason." (Jones on the Gods of Greece and India. As. Res. vol. I. No. 9.) It must here be observed, with all deference to the opinion of a person of such abilities as Sir W. Jones, that if there be any truth in the arguments of this Sermon, founded upon the manner in which our Scriptures are likely to affect the judicious *Hindú*, the book of Genesis ought to be offered to his consideration previous to all others. But before even this can be expected to interest him greatly, he must have learned to approve our civil institutions established in his country, and to respect the motives which influence our administration. He must further learn to respect our sciences, and to perceive their superiority over those of his own country. He must be able, also, to perceive the absurdities of the *Brahménical* chronology and geography; and, also, that the histories of the *Púránas* are nothing more than ingenious allegories. From the shadows of the *Púránas* he must be led to the substance of real history, and be enabled to estimate the general force of historical evidence. When he has made these attainments, he will be able to understand the evidences of the Christian religion, and his conversion will perhaps follow almost of course.

(30) To enable the *Hindú* to make these comparisons, and to feel the whole force of truth, it will perhaps be found expedient to print considerable portions of the *Sástra*, translated into the languages in common use, and then to render these as easy of access to all the natives as our own Scriptures. These must be made from the most genuine and authentic copies; and to attain such, they ought now to be diligently sought after, and procured before the *Brahmén* begins to hide them in his own defence. Perhaps no act our Legislature can

perform would be attended with more beneficial consequences, than to make good collections of the *Sástra*, and to publish good translations of the various works, with proper commentaries. Such a work would not be sufficiently entertaining to defray the expences of private publication ; but it would always be valuable ; and it is a work, which, under present circumstances, the world ought to receive from the hands of Britain.

THE END.

